Message Text

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FOR NEA/EGY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS, ETRD, EG, US

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM: LVO CASE

REF: (A) STATE 201649, (B) CAIRO 12479

1. AS MENTIONED REFTEL B, LVO CASE IS WELL KNOWN IN CAIRO PETROLEUM COMMUNITY. DISPUTE WAS INTENSIFIED BY RATHER ACRIMONIOUS RELATIONS (SEE REF B) WHICH EVENTUALLY DEVELOPED BETWEEN LVO AND EGPC. IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED HERE IN OIL INDUSTRY THAT PROBLEM WOULD NOT RPT NOT HAVE ARISEN IF IT HAD BEEN HANDLED MORE ADEPTLY BY BOTH SIDES. LVO, HOWEVER, IS FIRST TO TERMINATE AGREEMENT AND THEREFORE FIRST TO GO THROUGH PAINS OF GAINING GOE APPROVAL FOR DISPOSITON OF GOODS. TWO SERVICE COMPANY PROBLEMS MENTIONED REFTEL A DO NOT INVOLVE EXPLORATION/PRODCUTION SHARING AGREEMENTS. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS IN CASES MENTIONED. AMOCO IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN NEGOTIATIONS TO CLOSE WAREHOUSE OF OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT AT RAS SHUKAIR.

2. INDUSTRY IS WATCHING SITUATION CAREFULLY BECAUSE ALL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPANIES EXPECT TO HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEM SOONER OR LATER. PREDICTABLY, MAJORS ARE MUCH LESS CONCERNED, HAVING ANTICIPATED WRITE-OFF ALL ALONG; SMALLER COMPANIES DEFINITELY PLAN ON DISPOSING OF THEIR ASSETS AT END OF AGREEMENT. THERE IS NO DOUBT PROBLEM HAS FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES FOR GOE/COMPANY RELATIONS.

3. IN VIEW CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST, WE FULLY AGREE THAT LOV'S CASE MUST BE RAISED WITH EGPC, IN FIRST INSTANCE, AND WITH MINISTER OF PETROLEUM IF NECESSARY LATER ON. E/C COUNS HAS APPOINTMENT WITH EGPC CHAIRMAN RAMSI LEITHY ON MONDAY, AUGUST 29 TO DISCUSS SITUATION. AFTER THAT MEETING WE WILL RECOMMEND WHETHER LVO OFFICIAL SHOULD TRAVEL TO CAIRO FOR FURTHER DUSCUSSIONS. EILTS

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